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French Fisheries Mission in Cambodia

PROGRESS REPORT

by

Mr. F. d'Aubenton Carafa
Associate Professor, National Institute
of Natural History, Paris

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for period 15 October 1961 - 1 January 1962

Since 15 October 1961 the Fisheries Mission has been carrying out experimental fishing on the Tonle Sap as well as control checks on various fisheries.

With the agreement and assistance of Mr. Dom-Savoeun, Director of Fisheries, we have been able to use two days at Km 9 on the Tonle Sap. Those days have been under constant inspection, including the weighing of all fish captured; this will enable us to determine the exact dates and hours of passage of the various species. The fish migrate during periods of rising moon; the last migration, which occurred from 15 to 22 December, was the most productive. During those six days the captured fish had to be collected every 10 minutes. This work was made possible thanks to the cooperation of 12 fishermen and 4 technical assistants for the weighing and measuring operations. The most abundant fish is Cirrhinus auratus, which represented 31 tons out of the total catch of 50 tons.

Dissections showed that certain Cyprinidae such as:

Leptobarbus heevanii
Labeo chrysonhekadion
Osteochilus melanonlaura
Puntius altus
Puntius bulu
Puntius bramaides

were still in their breeding period. We also noted that Aloses (Clupea thibaudeaui) were in the process of maturation. Analysis of results will be effected during the months of January and February.

Daily physico-chemical measurements on the Mekong and Tonle Sap are being regularly continued. Sharp differences have been observed since the inversion of the Tonle Sap current, in particular as concerns dissolved oxygen.

Meanwhile, we had discussions with Mr. Kanwar Sain and Mr. Krishnamurthy concerning the project for a barrage on the Tonle Sap. Those discussions were mainly concerned with the problem of regulation of the two water-stages, upstream and downstream of the barrage, during the flood period migration.

/PERSONNEL

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The botanical investigation of the inundated forest will be resumed at the end of January 1962, as soon as the botanical expert, Mr. Schmid, returns to the area. This survey will be carried out in several missions of a duration of three weeks to one month each.

On 15 January, a technical assistant will arrive to complete the personnel of the Fisheries Mission. We will then recruit the necessary personnel (driver, interpreter, fishermen) to form a second team.

M. Blanc, Deputy Director of the National Institute of Natural History of Paris, will come to the area on a two-month mission at some appropriate time, when investigations reach their most important phase.

EQUIPMENT:

A turbine jet boat has been purchased to enable us to investigate the inundated forest and the rapids. The boat will be at our disposal as from 10 January 1962. A 15 HP outboard engine will complete the equipment for our two collapsible boats.

The programme of work defined in our October Progress Report has been implemented, and no modification of that programme is envisaged for the next two months. The programme of work for botanical investigations will be submitted to the Committee by Mr. Schmid immediately upon his return.